

Town of Arlington
Town Meeting Procedures Committee
August 2, 2023
Hybrid Meeting

Call to order: The meeting of the Town Meeting Procedures Committee was called to order by Town Moderator Greg Christiana on Wednesday, August 2, 2023 at 7:34pm.

Quorum: All Committee members were present: Adam Auster, Greg Christiana, Rebecca Gruber, Christopher Moore and John Worden. All Committee members attended in-person.

Public Comments: Greg Dennis, TMM Pct 1, suggested that the speaker queue be sorted in ascending order of the number of times a Town Meeting Member has previously spoken.

Minutes of Prior Meetings:

July 19, 2023:

Moved approval: Mr. Worden
Seconded: Mr. Auster
Vote: unanimous

Documentation of Procedures (continued):

- Mr. Christiana presented “Town Meeting Guidelines [DRAFT] version August 2nd 2023”
- Quick review of the “Consent Agenda [DRAFT]” section
- Reviewed “Policies for Main Motions and Subsidiary Motions [DRAFT]”
 - Discussed expanding to include supplemental reports
 - Whether supplemental reports can supercede previously received reports
 - When does a motion come before the Meeting
 - Discussion of how far in advance Town Meeting Members want / need materials for review
 - Discussion of condition #2
 - Materials available in print form only
 - Placed on the back table (not seats)
 - Town Hall copier available for use

Town Meeting Survey:

- Mr. Christiana presented some possible survey questions

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 9:12pm.

Moved: Mr. Worden

Seconded: Mr. Auster

Rebecca Gruber

Town Meeting Guidelines [DRAFT] version August 2nd 2023

Greg Christiana

Arlington Town Moderator

Initial draft presented to Town Meeting Procedures Committee: July 19, 2023 Updated draft: August 2, 2023

Consent Agenda [DRAFT]

TODO: definition and motivation for Consent Agenda

A preliminary Consent Agenda will be produced by the Moderator in consultation with the Town Manager and chairs of reporting boards and committees. Reasons for including an article in the preliminary Consent Agenda include the following:

- The article's main motion is effectively an annually recurring motion that has been voted affirmatively by Town Meeting in the past by overwhelming margins.
- The article's main motion updates outdated references.
- The article's main motion makes a clarifying change that the Moderator and reporting body

expect to have minimal impact in practice.

- The article's main motion brings the Town into compliance with laws, local statutes, or other requirements with minimal impact in practice.

- The article is a Citizen's Petition with a recommended vote of "no action" and the petitioner does not intend to pursue a substitute motion.

Ultimately, inclusion of an article in the preliminary Consent Agenda is at the Moderator's discretion. **A document describing reasons for the inclusion of articles in the preliminary Consent Agenda will be published by the Moderator in advance of Town Meeting.** This document will provide contact information for each article so that Town Meeting Members and members of the public can inquire about the articles in advance.

Removal of articles from the Consent Agenda will be permitted only at Town Meeting. When the Moderator enumerates each article on the Consent Agenda, Town Meeting Members will have an opportunity to "hold" an article so that it is debated and voted separately. When a Town Meeting Member requests a "hold", they must announce their name and precinct; if the held article has a recommended vote of "no action," the Moderator will ask if the Town Meeting Member intends to submit a substitute motion in advance of consideration of that article.

After TMMs have had an opportunity to request articles to be held from the Consent Agenda, the meeting will vote on the final Consent Agenda.

The Consent Agenda is divided into parts, e.g. articles requiring a majority vote, articles requiring a two-thirds vote, and legislative articles that require some TMMs to recuse themselves because of their work outside of Town Meeting. A separate vote is taken for each part of the final Consent Agenda.

Motions and Votes

Policies for Main Motions and Subsidiary Motions [DRAFT]

Motions brought before Town Meeting are expected to meet one of the following conditions:

1. A recommended vote, motion to amend, or substitute motion is published to the Annotated Warrant and distributed to the TMM Email List by 5 pm of the business day before the meeting at which the motion is made: 5 pm Friday for a Monday meeting, 5 pm Tuesday for a Wednesday meeting, or a day earlier in the case of holidays.
 - a. TODO
2. Handouts containing the motion's language are distributed on TMMs' seats and submitted to the Moderator, the Town Clerk, and Town Counsel in person before the start of the meeting at which the motion is made. (Note: handouts are allowed on seats only if they contain motions such as an amendment or substitute motion.)
 - a. TODO
3. The motion is made from the floor of the meeting provided that the motion's language is plain text that does not exceed 20 words.

All motions are subject to the Moderator's ruling on scope and order.

TMMs who want their motion to be considered for publishing to the Annotated Warrant and distribution to the TMM Email List must submit their motion to the Moderator in advance for review. Once a motion is submitted in writing to the Moderator, a response can be expected within 24 hours. If the submission requires multiple rounds of feedback, expect multiple business days for review.

The Town Clerk or Moderator can provide TMMs with a Word Doc template in the correct format for the desired motion. Submitting a proposed motion as a Word Doc or PDF and emailing the Moderator, Town Counsel, and Town Clerk can speed up the review process.

Once the Moderator approves a motion submitted by a TMM, the motion will be added to the Annotated Warrant and will be available to anyone looking at the materials attached to the Article, provided it can be published by 5 pm of the business day before the meeting at which the motion is made.

Sequence of Motions [DRAFT] (Use ATM 2023 Article 12 as a case study...)

Amendments and substitute motions must be voted before the motions that they amend or substitute.

At the Moderator's discretion, multiple amendments that amend the same motion are voted generally in the order of most significant change first and least significant change last: broader strokes before finer strokes.

Motions will generally be taken in the following order:

1. Motions submitted to the Moderator in advance.
2. Motions distributed in person the day of the meeting.
3. Motions made from speakers in the queue; short motions made from the floor will be taken from

speakers in the queue when recognized by the Moderator.

cf. Town Meeting Time Chapter 4 §23: "No more than one motion of the same rank may be pending at one time."
(All amendments and substitute motions have rank 11.)

Committee Reports and Recommended Votes [DRAFT]

Verbal reports to Town Meeting from boards and committees are limited to 4 minutes "unless prior to beginning, their presentation, the person requests of the Town Meeting a specific extension of time, and the request is granted by a majority vote of the Town Meeting members present and voting."

FinCom Chair: "Move that the recommended votes contained in the respective reports of the Finance Committee, Select Board, Redevelopment Board and other committees be before the meeting without further motion."

TODO: Moderator to make it clear to the meeting (and to reporting bodies). See TMT Chapter 4 section 26: Withdrawal (which isn't allowed)

Boards and committees can submit supplemental reports to make additions and corrections to previously submitted reports.

Additional Materials [DRAFT]

Presentation Guidelines [DRAFT]

Charts, photos, and other visual information that is pertinent to an Article will be permitted at Town Meeting at the discretion of the Moderator, and if approved, presented through the Town's presentation system. Content should be formatted for an aspect ratio of 16:9 if possible.

Content with animations will not be permitted unless the animation is particularly relevant for conveying information or context to the meeting (simple slide-transition animations are acceptable but unnecessary). Please use large, easily legible fonts (preferably a simple sans-serif font such as Arial or Verdana) with high contrast between text and background colors so that participants in the back of Town Hall auditorium can read the text. Tables with several rows or columns may not be legible from the back of the auditorium.

Video presentations may be permitted if the video provides important context that would be infeasible to convey by other means (e.g. aerial view of a location from drone footage). Spoken audio must be delivered live and in person within the Town Meeting enclosure.

All presentation materials must be submitted electronically 2 business days in advance to the Moderator (GChristiana@town.arlington.ma.us) to assess whether content is within scope, appropriate, and compatible with the Town's presentation system.

Additional electronic material that is relevant to a Warrant Article but not intended for live presentation at Town Meeting can be submitted to the Moderator (GChristiana@town.arlington.ma.us) to be considered for inclusion in the Annotated Warrant. See Town Meeting Member Submission Guidelines at: <https://www.arlingtonma.gov/town-governance/town-meeting/members-email-list>

Electronically Distributed Materials [DRAFT]

Submissions to be included in the TMM Email List and Annotated Warrant may be made by chairs of Town boards or committees, the Town Clerk, the Town Manager, department heads, and Town Meeting Members submitting

material within the scope of a Warrant Article that is not yet closed. (This is essentially the same set of people who can speak at Town Meeting and introduce guest speakers.) Town Meeting Members may submit materials that they have co-signed with residents. Material containing images or non-trivial formatting must be submitted in PDF format or other widely available document formats; submissions may be converted to PDF when distributed or posted within the Annotated Warrant. Submissions are made to the Moderator who reviews and approves them.

The Moderator will exercise discretion over the appropriateness and relevance of the material for distribution, regardless of the source.

Once a submission related to a Warrant Article has been approved, it will be distributed to the TMM Email List and attached to the Annotated Warrant for that article under the Additional Materials section, listed after board reports and subsidiary motions.

Announcements and Resolutions [DRAFT]

TODO

limited to 4 minutes...

something about how these resolutions ("complementary resolutions") are different from articles... Something about how to submit presentation slides - which should be done by 3 pm that day so the Clerk has time to get the slides to IT.

TMM Survey – Late 2023

How far in advance would you like motions posted to the Annotated Warrant and TMM email list so that you have sufficient time to review them?

- e.g. 5pm day before, 10am day of, 5pm day of

How important is it to you to attend every session of Town Meeting? (for self vs for others?)

Should there be any consequences for TMMs who don't regularly attend?

Do you wish to opt out of printed copies of materials? e.g. TM packet, amendments, and substitute motions during check-in at the meeting.

Questions for participants from the satellite room in the 2023 ATM:

- If you've served as a TMM in the Town Hall auditorium in the past, do you feel that the experience in the satellite room was equitable to the auditorium?